मराठी पुस्तके

हंटर शिक्षण आयोगापुढे सादर केलेले निवेदन

महात्मा जोतिबा फुले

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टंकन: हर्षला रामाणे

मुद्रितशोधन : आशा दादुडे

हंटर शिक्षण आयोगापुढे सादर केलेले निवेदन

हंटर शिक्षण आयोगापुढे १९ ऑक्टोबर १८८२ रोजी जोतीराव फुल्यांनी सादर केलेल्या निवेदनाचा संदर्भ व त्याचे महत्त्व लक्षात येण्यासाठी खालील ऐतिहासिक पार्श्वभूमीचे अवधान ठेवणे उपयुक्त ठरेल.

१८१३ सालापर्यंत ईस्ट इंडिया कंपनीने हिंदुस्थानात शिक्षणाचा प्रसार व्हावा यासाठी काहीही केले नव्हते. १८१३ मध्ये प्रथमच शिक्षणप्रसारासाठी अत्यंत तुटपुंज्या रकमेची तरतूद करण्यात आली. शिक्षणाचे माध्यम इंग्रजी असावे ही मेकॉलेची सूचना बेंटिंगने स्वीकारली तरी १८५५ साली हिंदुस्थानच्या जवळजवळ वीस कोटी लोकांसाठी सरकार चालवीत असलेल्या किंवा सरकारी अनुदान व मान्यता असलेल्या अवघ्या १,४७४ शिक्षणसंस्था सबंध देशात होत्या आणि त्यामध्ये शिकणाऱ्यांची संख्या अवघी ६७,५६९ इतकीच होती. ख्रिस्ती धर्मोपदेशकांनी चालवलेल्या १,६२८ शाळांमध्ये ६४,००० विद्यार्थी शिकत होते. १८५४ सालच्या वूडच्या खलित्यात सरकारने शिक्षण क्षेत्रातून अंग काढून घ्यावे आणि प्राथमिक शिक्षणासाठी अनुदान द्यावे अशा शिफारसी करण्यात आल्या होत्या. १८५४ ते १८८२ या काळात माध्यमिक तसेच उच्च शिक्षणाच्या क्षेत्रात महत्त्वाची पावले टाकली गेली तरी प्राथमिक शिक्षणाची वाढ फारच मंदगतीने झाली. १८८१-८२ साली सरकार शिक्षणावर ७० लक्ष रुपये खर्च करीत होते, त्यापैकी १६ लक्ष ७७ हजार रुपये प्राथमिक शिक्षण देण्यासाठी खर्च केले जात होते.

लॉर्ड रिपन या उदारमतवादी व्हाईस रॉयच्या कारकीर्दीत त्याने सर विल्यम हंटरच्या अध्यक्षतेखाली एक शिक्षण आयोग नेमला. त्यात अध्यक्षाखेरीज २० सभासद होते आणि त्यांपैकी ८ सभासद भारतीय होते. या आयोगाने वूडच्या खलित्यातील मुख्य सूत्रांचा पुनरुच्चार केला. मात्र प्राथमिक शिक्षणावर जास्त भर द्यावा आणि ते मागासलेल्या तसेच आदिवासी जाती-जमातींना द्यावे अशी शिफारस केली. महात्मा फुल्यांनी सादर केलेल्या निवेदनात "किमान १२ वर्षे वयापर्यंतच्या मुलांना प्राथमिक शिक्षण सक्तीचे असावे" असे सुचविले होते. हंटर आयोगाने मात्र "प्राथमिक शिक्षण सक्तीचे असावे" अशी शिफारस केलेली नाही. लोकल सेस फंडापैकी निम्म्याहून अधिक भाग प्राथमिक शिक्षणासाठी खर्च करावा, प्राथमिक शाळांची संख्या वाढवावी, त्यांना प्रांतिक सरकारांनी भरघोस अनुदान द्यावे, नगरपालिकांनी प्राथमिक शाळांवर होणाऱ्या सर्व खर्चाची जबाबदारी घ्यावी, प्राथमिक शाळांचा कारभार मात्र शिक्षण खात्याच्या देखरेखीखाली चालावा, प्राथमिक शाळांतील शिक्षक प्रशिक्षित असावेत अशा अनेक महत्त्वाच्या सूचना जोतीरावांनी केल्या होत्या. हंटर आयोगाने त्या सर्व जशाच्या तशा स्वीकारल्या नाहीत. आयोगाच्या अहवालाचा मसुदा हंटरसाहेबांनी तयार केला असला तरी त्यात सुधारणा करणाऱ्या

समितीने इतके बदल केले की, आयोगाचा प्रकाशित झालेला अहवाल वाचणे कंटाळवाणे होईल असे खुदद हंटरसाहेबांनीच एका खाजगी पत्रात भाकित केले आणि "आपण लिहीलेल्या भागाची मांडणी अशा रीतीने करण्यात आली आहे की, त्यात आपले असे काही राहिलेले नाही" अशी कबुलीही त्यांनी दिली. (पहा : फ्रान्सिस हेन्री स्काइन यांनी लिहीलेले लाईफ ऑफ सर विल्यम विल्सन हंटर हे १९०१ साली प्रसिद्ध झालेले चरित्र : पृ. ३२६).

हटर शिक्षण आयोगाच्या शिफारशी फुल्यांना समाधानकारक वाटल्या नाहीत. १८९१ साली प्रसिद्ध झालेल्या "सार्वजनिक सत्य धर्म" पुस्तकात तर जोतीरावांनी हंटरसाहेबास "हिंदूतील आर्य ब्राह्मणखेरीजकरून शूद्रादि अतिशूद, भिल्ल, कोळी वगैरे लोकांविषयी बिलकूल ज्ञान नाही म्हणून ते तसा वाचाळपणा करीत आहेत" अशी हंटरसाहेबांवर परखड शब्दात टीका केलेली आढळते.

Memorial Addressed To The
Education Commission

A Statement for the information of the Education commission

My experience in educational matters is principally confined to Poona and the surrounding villages. About 25 years ago, the missionaries had established a female school at Poona but no indigenous school for girls existed at the time. I, therefore, was induced, about the year 1854, (हा मुद्रण दोष असावा. १८५१ असें असावयास पाहिजे.) to establish such a school, and in which I and my wife worked together for many years. After some time I placed this school under the management of a committee of educated natives. Under their auspices two more schools were opened in different parts of the town. A year after the institution of the female schools, I also established an indigeneous mixed school for the lower classes, especially the Mahars and Mangs. Two more schools for these classes were subsequently added. Sir Erskine Perry, the president of the late Educational Board, and Mr. Lumsdain, the then Secretary to Government, visited the female schools and were much pleased with the movement set on foot, and presented me with a pair of shawls. I continued to work in them for nearly 9 to 10 years, but owing to circumstances, which it is needless here to detail, I seceded from the work. These female schools still exist, having been made over by the committee to the Educational Department under the management of Mrs. Mitchell. A school for the lower classes, Mahars and Mangs, also exists at the present day, but not in a satisfactory condition. I have also been a teacher for some years in a mission female boarding school. My principal experience was gained in connection with these schools. I devoted some attention also to the primary education available in this Presidency and have had some opportunities of forming an opinion as to the system and *personnel* employed in the lower schools of the Educational Department. I wrote some years ago a Marathi pamphlet exposing the religious practices of the Brahmins and incidentally among other matters, adverted therein to the present system of education, which by providing ampler funds for higher education tended to educate Brahmins and the higher classes only, and to leave the masses wallowing in ignorance and poverty. I summarized the views expressed in the book in an English preface attached thereto, portions of which I reproduce here so far as they relate to the present enquiry:-

“Perhaps a part of the blame in bringing matters to this crisis may be justly laid to the credit of the Government. Whatever may have been their motives in providing ampler funds and greater facilities for higher education, and neglecting that of the masses, it will be acknowledged by all that in justice to the latter, this is not as it should be. It is an admitted fact that the greater portions of the revenues of the Indian Empire are derived from the ryot’s labour form the sweat of his brow. The higher and richer classes contribute little or nothing to the state exchequer. A well-informed English writer states that our income is derived, not from the poorest necessaries. It is the product of sin and tears.

“That Government should expend profusely a large portion of revenue thus raised, on the education of the higher classes, for it is these only who take advantage of it, is anything but just or equitable. Their object in patronizing this virtual high class education appears to be to prepare

scholars who, it is thought would in time vend learning without money and without price. If we can inspire, say they, the love of knowledge in the minds of the superior classes, the result will be a higher standard, of morals in the cases of the individuals, a large amount of affection for the British Government, and unconquerable desire to spread among their own countrymen the intellectual blessings which they have received.

"Regarding these objects of Government the writer above alluded to, states that we have never heard of philosophy more benevolent and more utopian. It is proposed by men who witness the wondrous changes brought about in the Western world, purely by the agency of popular knowledge, to redress the defects of the two hundred millions of India, by giving superior education to the superior classes and to them only. We ask the friends of Indian Universities to favour us with a single example of the truth of their theory from the instances which have already fallen within the scope of their experience. They have educated many children of wealthy men and have been the means of advancing very materially the wordly prospects of some of their pupils. But what contribution have these made to great work of regenerating their fellowmen? How have they begun to act upon the masses? Have any of them formed classes at their own homes or elsewhere, for the instruction of their less fortunate or less wise countrymen? Or have they kept their knowledge to themselves, as a personal gift, not to be soiled by contact with ignorant vulgar? Have they in any way shown themselves anxious to advance the general interests and repay the philanthropy with patriotism? Upon what grounds is it asserted that the best way to advance the moral and intellectual welfare of the people is to raise the standard of instruction among the higher classes? A glorious arguments this for aristocracy, were it only tenable. To show the growth of the national happiness, it would only be necessary to refer to the number of pupils at the colleges and the lists of academic degrees. Each wrangler would be accounted a national benefactor; and the existenc of Deans and Proctors would be associated, like the game laws and the ten-pound franshise, with the best interests of the constitution.

"One of the most glaring tendencies of Government system of high class education has been the virtual monopoly of all the higher offices under them by Brahmins. If the welfare of the Ryot is at heart, if it is the duty of Government to check a host of abuses it behoves them to narrow this monopoly day by day so as to allow a sprinkling of the other castes to get into the public services. Perhaps some might be inclined to say that it is not feasible in the present state of education. Our only reply is that if Government look a little less after higher education which is able to take care of itself and more towards the education of the masses there would be no difficulty in training up a body of men every way qualified and perhaps far better in morals and manners.

"My object in writing the present volume is not only to tell my Shudra brethren how they have been duped by the Brahmins, but also to open the eyes of Government to that pernicious system of high class education, which has hitherto been so persistently followed, and which statesmen like Sir George Campbell, the present Lieutenant Governor of Bengal, with broad universal sympathies are finding to be highly mischievous and pernicious to the interests of Government. I sincerely hope that Government will ere long see the error of their ways, trust less to writers or men who look through highclass spectacles, and take the glory into their own hands of emancipating my Shudra brethren from the trammels of bondage which the Brahmins have woven around them like the coils of a serpent. It is no less the duty of each of my Shudra

brethren as have received any education, to place before Government the true state of their fellowmen and endeavour to the best of their power to emancipate themselves from Brahmin thralldom. Let there be schools for the Shudras in every village; but away with all Brahmin schools-masters! The Shudras are the life and sinews of the country, and it is to them alone, and not to the Brahmins, that Government must ever look to tide over their difficulties, financial as well as political. If the hearts and minds of the Shudras are made happy and contented, the British Government need have no fear for their loyalty in the future."

PRIMARY EDUCATION

There is little doubt that primary education among the masses in this Presidency has been very much neglected. Although the number of primary schools now in existence is greater than those existing a few years ago, yet they are not commensurate to the requirements of the community. Government collects a special cess for educational purposes, and it is to be regretted that this fund is not spent for the purposes for which it is collected. Nearly nine-tenths of the villages in this Presidency, or nearly 10 lakhs of children, it is said, are without any provision, whatever, for primary instruction. A good deal of their poverty, their want of self-reliance' their entire dependence upon the learned and intelligent classes, is attributable to this deplorable state of education state of education among the peasantry.

Even *in towns* the Brahmins, the Purbhoos, the hereditary classes, who generally live by the occupation of pen, and the trading classes seek primary instruction. The cultivating and the other classes, as a rule, do not generally avail themselves of the same. A few of the latter class are found in primary and secondary schools, but owing to their poverty and other causes they do not continue long at school. As there are no special inducements for these to continue at school, they naturally leave off as soon as they find any menial or other occupation. In *villages* also most of the cultivating classes hold aloof, owing to extreme poverty, and also because they require their children to tend cattle and look after their fields. Besides an increase in the number of schools, special inducements in the shape of scholarships and half-yearly or annual prizes, to encourage them to send their children to school and thus create in them a taste for learning, is most essential. I think primary education of the masses should be made compulsory up to a certain age, say at least 12 years. Muhammadans also hold aloof from these schools, as they some-how evince no liking for Marathi or English. There are a few Muhammadan primary schools where their own language is taught. The *Mahars, Mangs*, and other lower classes are practically excluded from all schools owing to caste prejudices, as they are not allowed to sit by the children of higher castes. Consequently special schools for these have been opened by Government. But these exist only in large town. In the whole of Poona and for a population exceeding over 5,000 people, there is only one school, and in which the attendance is under 30 boys. This state of matters is not at all creditable to the educational authorities. Under the promise of the Queen's Proclamation I beg to urge that Mahars, Mangs, and other lower classes, where their number is large enough, should have separate schools for them, as they are not allowed to attend the other schools owing to caste prejudices.

In the present state of education, payment by results is not at all suitable for the promotion of education amongst a poor and ignorant people, as no taste has yet been created among them for education. I do not think any teacher would undertake to open schools on his own account

among these people, as he would not be able to make a living by it. Government schools and special inducements, as noted above, are essential until such a taste is created among them.

With regard to the few Government primary schools that exist in the Presidency, I beg to observe that the primary education imparted in them is not at all placed on a satisfactory or sound basis. The system is imperfect in so far as it does not prove practical and useful in the future career of the pupils. The system is capable of being developed up to the requirement of the community, if improvements that will result in its future usefulness be effected in it. Both the teaching machinery employed and the course in instruction now followed, require a through remodelling.

(a) The teachers now employed in the primary schools are almost all Brahmins; a few of them are from the normal training college, the rest being all untrained men. Their salaries are very low, seldom exceeding Rs. 10, and their attainments also very meagre. But as a rule they are all unpractical men, and the boys who learn under them generally imbibe inactive habits and try to obtain service, to the avoidance of their hereditary or other hardy or independent professions. I think teachers for primary schools should be trained, as far as possible, out of the cultivating classes, who will be able to mix freely with them and understand their wants and wishes much better than a Brahmin teacher, who generally holds himself aloof under religious prejudices. These would, moreover, exercise a more beneficial influence over the masses than teachers of other classes, and who will not feel ashamed to hold the handle of a plough or the carpenter’s adze when required, and who will be able to mix themselves readily with the lower orders of society. The course of training for them ought to include besides the ordinary subjects, an elementary knowledge of agriculture and sanitation. The untrained teachers should, except when thoroughly efficient, be replaced by efficient trained teachers. To secure a better class of teachers and to improve their position, better salaries should be given. Their salaries should not be less than Rs. 12 and in larger villages should be at least Rs. 15 or 20. Associating them in the village polity as auditors of village accounts or registrars of deeds, or village postmasters or stamp vendors, would improve their status, and thus exert a beneficial influence over the people among whom they live. The schoolmasters of village schools who pass a large number of boys should also get some special allowance other than their pay, as an encouragement to them.

(b) The course of instruction should consist of reading, writing Modi, and Balbodh and accounts, and a rudimentary knowledge of, general history, general geography, and grammer, also an elementary knowledge of agriculture and a few lessons on moral duties and sanitation. The studies in the village schools might be fewer than those in larger villages and towns, but not the less practical. In connection with lessons in agriculture, a small model farm, where practical instruction to the pupils can be given, would be a decided advantage and, if really efficiently managed, would be productive of the greatest good to the country. The text-book in use, both in the primary and Anglovernacular schools, require revision and recasting as much as they are not practical or progressive in their scope. Lessons on technical education and morality, sanitation and agriculture, and some useful arts, should be interspersed among them in progressive series. The fees in the primary schools should be as 1 to 2 from the children of cess-payers and non-cesspayers.

(c) The supervising agency over these primary schools is also very defective and sufficient. The Deputy Inspector's visit once a year can hardly be of any appreciable benefit. All these schools ought at least to be inspected quarterly if not oftener. I would also suggest the advisability of visiting these schools at other times and without any intimation being given. No reliance can be placed on the district or village officers owing to the multifarious duties devolving on them, as they seldom find time to visit them, and when they do, their examination is necessarily very superficial and imperfect. European Inspector's supervision is also occasionally very desirable, as it will tend to exercise a very efficient control over the teachers generally.

(d) The Number of primary schools should be increased-

(1) By utilizing such of the indigenous schools as shall be or are conducted by trained and certificated teachers, by giving them liberal grants-in-aid.

(2) By making over one half of the local cess fund for primary education alone.

(3) By compelling, under a statutory enactment, municipalities to maintain all the primary schools within their respective limits.

(4) By an adequate grant from the provincial or imperial funds.

Prizes and scholarships to pupils, and capitation or other allowance to the teachers, as an encouragement, will tend to render these schools more efficient.

The Municipalities in large towns should be asked to contribute whole share of the expenses incurred on primary schools within the municipal areas. But in no case ought the management of the same to be entirely made over to them. They should be under the supervision of the Educational Department.

The municipalities should also give grants-in-aid to such secondary and private English schools as shall be conducted according to the rules of the Educational Department, where their funds permit, such grants-in-aid being regulated by the number of boys passed every year. These contributions from municipal funds may be made compulsory by statutory enactment.

The administration of the funds for primary education should ordinarily be in the hands of the Director of Public Instruction.

But if education and intelligent men are appointed on the local or district committees, these funds may be safely entrusted to them, under the guidance of the Collector, or the Director of Public Instructions. At present, the local boards consist of ignorant and uneducated men, such as Patels, Inamdars, Surdars, & C. who would not be capable of exercising any intelligent control over the funds.

INDIGENOUS SCHOOLS

Indigenous schools exist a good deal in cities, towns and some large villages, especially where there is a Brahmin population. From the latest reports of Public Instruction in this Presidency, it is found that there are 1,049 indigenous schools with about 27,694 pupils in them. They are conducted on the old village system. The boys are generally taught the multiplication table by heart, a little Modi writing and reading, and to recite a few religious pieces. The teachers, as a rule, are not capable of effecting any improvements, as they are not initiated in the art of teaching. The fees charged in these schools range from 2 to 8 annas. The teachers generally come from the dregs of Brahminical society. Their qualifications hardly go beyond reading and writing Marathi very indifferently, and casting accounts up to the rule of three or so. They set up as teachers as the last resource of getting a livelihood. Their failure or unfitness in other callings of life obliges them to open schools. No arrangements exist in the country to train up teachers for indigenous schools. The indigenous schools could not be turned to any good account, unless the present teachers are replaced by men from the training colleges and by those who pass the 6th standard in the vernaculars. The present teachers will willingly accept State aid but money thus spent will be thrown away. I do not know any instance in which a grant-in-aid is paid to such a school. If it is being paid anywhere, it must be in very rare cases. In my opinion no grants-in-aid should be paid to such schools unless the master is a certificated one. But if certificated or competent teachers be found, grants-in-aid should be given and will be productive of great good.

HIGHER EDUCATION

The cry over the whole country has been for some time past that Government have amply provided for higher education, whereas that of the masses has been neglected. To some extent this cry is justified, although the classes directly benefited by the higher education may not readily admit it. But for all this no well-wisher of his country would desire that Government should, at the present time, withdraw its aid from higher education. All that they would wish is that as one class of the body politic has been neglected, its advancement should form as anxious a concern as that of the other. Education in India is still in its infancy. Any withdrawal of State aid from higher education cannot but be injurious to the spread of education generally.

A taste for education among the higher and wealthy classes, such as the Brahmins and Purbhoos, especially those classes who live by the pen, has been created, and a gradual withdrawal of State aid may be possible so far as these classes are concerned; but in the middle and lower classes, among whom higher education has made no perceptible progress, such a withdrawal would be a great hardship. In the event of such withdrawal, boys will be obliged to have recourse to inefficient and sectarian schools, much against their wish, and the cause of education cannot but suffer. Nor could any part of such education be entrusted to private agency. For a long time to come the entire educational machinery, both ministerial and executive, must be in the hands of Government. Both the higher and primary education requires all the fostering care and attention which Government can bestow on it.

The withdrawal of Government from schools or colleges would not only tend to check the spread of education, but would seriously endanger that spirit of neutrality which has all along been the aim of Government to foster, owing to the different nationalities and religious creeds prevalent in India. This withdrawal may, to a certain extent, create a spirit of self-reliance for

local purposes in the higher and wealthy classes, but the cause of education would be so far injured that the spirit of self-reliance would take years to remedy that evil. Educated men of ability, who do not succeed in getting into public service, may be induced to open schools for higher education on being assured of liberal grants-in-aid. But no one would be ready to do so on his own account as a means of gaining a livelihood, and it is doubtful whether such private efforts could be permanent or stable, nor would they succeed half so well in their results. Private schools, such as those of Mr. Vishnu Shastree Chiploonkar and Mr. Bhavey, exist in Poona, and with adequate grants-in-aid may be rendered very efficient, but they can never supersede the necessity of the high school.

The missionary schools, although some of them are very efficiently conducted, do not succeed half so well in their results, nor do they attract half the number of students which the high school attract. The superiority of Government schools is mainly owing to the richly paid staff of teachers and professors which it is not possible for private schools to maintain.

The character of instruction given in the Government higher schools, is not at all practical, or such as is required for the necessities of ordinary life. It is only good to turn out so many clerks and schoolmasters. The Matriculation examination unduly engrosses the attention of the teachers and pupils for his future career in independent life. Although the number of students presenting for the Entrance examination is not at all large when the diffusion of Knowledge in the country is taken into consideration, it looks large when the requirements of Government service are concerned. Were the education universal and within easy reach of all, the number would have been larger still, and it should be so, and I hope it will be so hereafter. The higher education should be so arranged as to be within easy reach of all, and the books on the subjects for the Matriculation examination should be published in the Government Gazette, as is done in Madras and Bengal. Such a course will encourage private studies and secure larger diffusion of knowledge in the country. It is a boon to the people that the Bombay University recognizes private studies in the case of those presenting for the entrance examination. I hope, the University authorities will be pleased to extend the same boon to higher examinations. If private studies were recognized by the University in granting the degrees of B.A., M.A. &c., many young men will devote their time to private studies. Their doing so will still further tend to the diffusion of knowledge. It is found in many instances quite impossible to prosecute studies at the colleges for various reasons. If private studies be recognized by the University, much good will be affected to the country at large, and a good deal of the drain on the public purse on account of higher education will be lessened.

The system of Government scholarships, at present followed in the Government schools, is also defective, as much as it gives undue encouragement to those classes only, who have already acquired a taste for education to the detriment of the other classes. The system might be so arranged that some of these scholarships should be awarded to such classes amongst whom education has made no progress.

The system of awarding them by competition, although abstractedly equitable, does not tend to the spread of education among other classes.

With regard to the question as to educated natives finding remunerative employments, it will be remembered that the educated natives who mostely belong to the Brahminical and other higher classes are mostely fond of services. But as the public service can afford no field for all the educated natives who come out from schools and colleges, and more over the course of training they receive being not of a technical or practical nature, they find great difficulty in be taking themselves to other manual or remunerative employments. Hence the cry that the market is overstocked with educated natives who do not find any remunerative employment. It may, to a certain extent, be true that some of the professions are overstocked, but this does not show that there is no other remunerative employment to which they can be take themselves. The present number of educated men is very small in relation to the country at large, and we trust that the day may not be far distant when we shall have the present number multiplied a hundred-fold and all be taking themselves to useful and remunerative occupations and not be looking after service.

In conclusion, I beg to request the Education Commission to be kind enough to sanction measures for the spread of female primary education on a more liberal scale.

Poona,
19th October 1882.

JOTEERAO GOVINDRAO PHOOLEY,
Merchant and Cultivator and
Municipal Commissioner,
Peth Joona Ganja.

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—समाप्त—